16 Essential Guidelines for Every Fantasy League Constitution

A practical checklist for commissioners and team owners. Put these provisions in writing before the season begins to protect competitive integrity, set clear expectations and prevent avoidable disputes.

01. League structure and scoring. Define the league format, number of teams, scoring categories or points, schedule, divisions, roster sizes and host platform. Identify which rules control if platform settings conflict with the constitution.

02. Commissioner authority and conflicts of interest. Specify the commissioner's powers, duties and limits. Require consistent enforcement, transparency and recusal when a decision directly involves the commissioner's own team.

03. League dues and prize distribution. State entry fees, payment deadlines, custody of funds, prize allocations, payout timing and consequences for nonpayment. Disclose any fees before members commit.

04. Draft procedures. Establish draft format, order, timing, eligibility, time limits, nomination or auction rules, and procedures for absences, technical problems and draft errors.

05. Roster and lineup requirements. Define positional eligibility, roster limits, injury and reserve slots, lineup deadlines and consequences for illegal or incomplete lineups.

06. Waivers and free-agent acquisitions. Specify waiver priority or free-agent acquisition budget (FAAB), processing times, tie-breakers, dropped-player restrictions and whether FAAB may be traded.

07. Trade rules and review standards. Define permitted assets, trade deadlines, acceptance, processing and review windows. Specify grounds for rejection, including collusion, rule violations or serious harm to competitive integrity. Avoid vetoes based solely on personal player valuations.

08. Trade finality and reversals. State when an accepted trade becomes binding. Limit reversals to defined circumstances supported by evidence, such as a material submission error or rule violation, rather than buyer's remorse.

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09. Competitive integrity and tanking. Prohibit collusion, roster dumping, deliberate losing and undisclosed side agreements. Distinguish legitimate rebuilding in keeper or dynasty formats from conduct that undermines fair competition.

10. Keeper and dynasty provisions. If applicable, specify keeper limits, salaries, contracts, renewal deadlines, future draft-pick trading, protections for future dues and procedures for orphaned teams.

11. Playoffs, standings and tie-breakers. Define qualification, seeding, reseeding, matchup periods, tie-breaker order and how postponed games or statistical corrections affect final results.

12. Technical issues and exceptional circumstances. Establish reporting deadlines, evidence requirements and narrowly tailored remedies for platform outages, scoring errors and extraordinary events. Avoid granting an advantage based on hindsight.

13. Rule amendments and voting. Define who may propose changes, notice requirements, quorum, voting thresholds and effective dates. Generally defer material changes until the offseason unless a defined emergency procedure applies.

14. Member conduct and discipline. Set expectations for respectful communication, good-faith participation and active team management. Identify prohibited conduct, proportionate penalties, notice and an opportunity to respond.

15. Dispute resolution and appeals. Establish how and when disputes must be submitted, what evidence is required, who decides and how appeals are handled. Designate an independent service such as Fantasy Judgment for unresolved disputes or conflicts of interest, and specify the effect of its ruling.

16. Publication and acknowledgment. Provide every member access to the current constitution before the season, require acknowledgment of the rules and maintain a dated record of amendments and significant decisions.

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